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Dr. M. N. Eddy

Hulbert, Calvin Butler,
Pres. Midd.

MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE

INAUGURATION SERVICES,

JULY 21, 1875.

INAUGURATION

OF

REV. CALVIN B. HULBERT

AS

PRESIDENT

OF

MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE,

Inaugurations

JULY 21, 1875.

Andover:
WARREN F. DRAPER, PRINTER,
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1876.

INAUGURATION.

The Inauguration of Rev. Calvin B. Hulbert as President of Middlebury College, took place at the Congregational Church at Middlebury, at the close of the Commencement Exercises, July 21st, 1875.

After the conferring of the degrees, the retiring President, Rev. H. D. Kitchel, D.D., stepped forward, and in a few happy words, cordially congratulated the Corporation and friends of the College on the choice which they had made in the new President, and, with a few generous and hopeful utterances, made a formal transfer into his hands of the official insignia. Receiving the keys, President Hulbert responded as follows:

RESPONSE OF THE NEW PRESIDENT.

It is with peculiar pleasure, sir, that I receive these symbols of office at your hands. Having yourself put them to honorable service in the College for a term of years, and experienced the responsibilities of the position which I this day assume, I am sure that in passing them to me, you do it in sympathetic appreciation of the necessities that are laid upon me, and the difficulties that will environ and impede my course.

I thank you, sir, for your words of generous welcome and good cheer; I thank you for the encouraging and hopeful view which you have taken of the College and of her future. Your assurances of confidence give me strength as I venture upon my task. Placing my confidence in the pledged co-operation of the guardians of the College, in her able board of instruction, of large experience in their work,

in her alumni, all faithful to the mother that bore them, and in her many friends and benefactors, and especially in Him who "hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and . . . the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, and base things of the world, and things which are despised, . . . yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are," I advance to my work. One word, however, at this point, if it may be permitted me. I am sure that I shall incur no unfavorable judgment, if I say that the time accorded me has been too brief, and the pressure of ministerial duty meanwhile too great, to allow me fit preparation for so grave a service. Not willing, however, to enter upon an office whose duties will be immediately pressing, embarrassed by the Inaugural deferred to some future occasion, I gladly avail myself of a generous permission to appear to-day, substituting for what otherwise might be expected, a simple Address, which I can ask you to accept as possessing no higher claims than those of an effort made in an emergency.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

Gentlemen of the Corporation, Gentlemen of the Faculty, and Gentlemen Alumni, Undergraduates of the College, Fathers and Friends: I speak to-day with the confidence of a man who is invited to do so, but with the faltering distrust of one who stands appalled at the magnitude of the task before him. If any account it a presumption that an alien from the commonwealth of this Israel, and a stranger from her covenants of promise, should stand in this presence and in this relation, my only apology is, that having been welcomed for a series of years as a proselyte at her gates, and there having served her according to the measure of my ability, reluctantly I have yielded — though it may appear to some of you with an unseemly promptitude — to the pressure that has advanced me to this service.

It ought not, indeed, to be accounted by you a thing incredible that having begun my professional life, and prose-

cuted it for a decade of years, in this immediate neighborhood, I soon found myself in friendly association with the Faculty of the College, with her many friends and supporters, and fell at once into downright sympathy with them in their endeavors to augment her funds, multiply her students, and enhance her prosperity, her usefulness, and her renown. If it may be charged against me that I have never been a student *in* the College, ought not the consideration that I have been a student *of* the College, in the sense that, united with others, I have made her interests for well nigh a score of years my diligent study, to be accepted in the judgment of liberal men as an adequate compensation for the defect? And if this apology suffice not, I have yet this statement to append: that I have personally received from your Alma Mater, in my prolonged residence almost within the covert of her classic shades, in my contact and association with her accomplished teachers, in my living in and breathing the atmosphere of scholarly culture which she has created and diffused richly in and around the homes that adorn this beautiful valley, and in the inspirations which she has enkindled as annually I have been wont to come up and sit with you at her feast of reason — inspirations which never failed to send me back to my study to prepare the better for the approaching Sabbath, — I have received, I say, from your Alma Mater, in these forms of contact and by accretion, a deposit of good in the stores of my own being which my own mother — and she is generous enough to pardon the utterance — found it impossible to make. So consciously am I indebted to your College in the stimulus which she has given me that were I required to point to-day to the seat of learning which has conferred upon me the greatest good, I should point in truth, and without disparagement to my own, to the College in which your intellectual life had its beginnings and its impulsions.

Nor can you demur at my according this magnanimity to your mother; for surely you would be the last to maintain that the College that sent her angels down to stir the fountains of your being, and that girt you round with

radiant bands of might, and sent you forth equipped for service in the high places of the field, is so ungenerous in her benefactions as to confine them to the circle of her own alumni. It is the occasion of your filial pride that the ennobling influences, which she exerts and diffuses through you, transcend immeasurably these narrow limits, and travel like the sunbeams, and with the equivalent of their prodigality and beneficence. There is neither a pulpit nor a law-office, there is not a store nor shop, not a school-house, not a public thoroughfare nor a rood of ground, in the extended section of country around us, that has not felt the transforming touch of Middlebury College. It is in this comprehensive sense that your Alma Mater has a body of alumni more numerous than your exclusive Triennial has been wont to allow; and, permit me to add, that it is, in part, in this very sense of value received from her, that I promise to pay in fulfilling the duties here assumed.

It is with this personal reference, and in apology, that I have spoken, not because oppressed by any sense of necessity to do so, but because I find thus my most natural approach to my theme through an avenue opening to it in my own experience of labor for the College. As first a looker-on, then a guest at her entertainments, and finally a counsellor in her service, I have made Middlebury College in her later history my most earnest and thoughtful study; and therefore, very naturally, heeding the imperious demands of the hour, I make her my theme to-day; not to trace the lines of her history and mark her varying fortunes, — that has been done in the Baccalaureate[1] which appropriately closed an administration of golden worth to the College, running back in her history for a quarter of a century, with the exultant inquiry, "Watchman, what of the night?" and with the victorious shout, "The morning cometh"; not to dwell upon "The nature and scope of that educational work which it is the aim of this institution to accomplish," — that has been

[1] A Baccalaureate Discourse delivered at Middlebury, Vermont, Aug. 6, 1865, by Benjamin Labaree, D.D., on the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of his Presidency. Text: Isa. xxi. 11, 12.

compassed and set forth in the Inaugural[1] of my honored predecessor, with a clearness of apprehension and a felicity of phrase that leaves nothing to be added; not to recall, biographically, the great names that impart charm and illustration to her record, though if any, equally might your Alma Mater exclaim, in the pride of a maternal affection, "I would not exchange my dead sons for all the living ones of Christendom," — not to these specialties concerning her do I call attention, but to Middlebury College as an objective, visible whole — a fact of history, a constellated orb "with healing in its wings"; an institution both the match and the peer of any New England college in the excellence of her work; having "a local habitation" on the Otter Creek in the valley of the Champlain, and "a name" that has passed beyond it, — to her do I call attention; a theme not invested in this presence and in this community with the charms of novelty, and yet invested to our appreciative minds with other charms, and more entrancing.

My plan is simple. It appertains not so much to the internal life and discipline as to the outward relations and dependence of the College. Some little note will we take of *the difficulties that have embarassed her, and the conditions of her success.* While I speak somewhat interrogatively, as in deference to your judgment, you will not require that I give an uncertain sound, or speak with faltering accents and timidity, as though treading upon ground where every footfall may chance to touch some hidden spring of evil. As a plain, blunt man, I will speak right on what I do know; and that is what we all do know.

Middlebury College, like everything else in our world that is positively good, has asserted and maintained her right to be, and to continue to be, by confronting *difficulties that have disputed every inch of her progress.* Among these I name, first in order, if not the first in importance, the public agitation of the question of union between herself and the University of Vermont. However worthy may have been

[1] The Address of Rev. H. D. Kitchel, D.D., delivered at his Inauguration as President of Middlebury College on Commencement Day, Aug. 9, 1866.

the motive that led to this agitation, it must be conceded that, in the failure to compass the object sought, the effect upon both institutions has been evil, and only evil, continually.

It is not sufficiently considered that a literary institution is radically attached to locality. It has roots that bind it to the soil where it grows. It is acclimated to the alternations of its native air. It has instincts and sympathies that exult in the charms of its material surroundings and adornments. Transplantation can be effected only at the peril of its life. Its friends may be beguiled by the plea of union; but the union will be sure to end in absorption. The spot where it stood will be its grave.

Nothing is more impossible than for these two colleges to unite and each retain its original integrity. So obvious is this fact to the popular apprehension, that the discussion which has prevailed on this question of union has had the inevitable effect of disturbing public confidence in the permanent existence of either the one or the other; and to disturb that confidence in either is to imperil the existence of both. They are pre-eminently colleges of the people, and by the people, and for the people; and therefore any impairing of public confidence in the local continuance of this college or that, could be only injurious, if not fatal, to both.

That this has been the practical effect of this attempt at union the friends of both institutions are in haste to allow. It has tended to deplete them both of students, to withhold public patronage, and to forbid endowments; for men who have both the heart and the means to come to their aid, and to place them upon a sound financial basis, have found an easy occasion to decline our application, not so much by falling back on the *merits* of this question discussed, as by resting their negation in the fact that *we ourselves are debating it.* Observe I am raising no question as to the wisdom of the fathers, in founding these two institutions in Western Vermont; nor do I call in question the worthiness of the motives that have prompted the many friends of education in the State who, bewailing what they account a mistake in the

fathers and an unhappy rival relation between these two institutions, have sought to make them one. Had these efforts long ago been crowned with success, the event would have been hailed by the intelligent public at large as a boon. But the question of duty debated by the good men who have gone before us is not our question of duty to-day. Taking these two institutions as they now stand, each rooted to its own soil, and compacted and strengthened by the varying fortunes and struggles of nearly a century's growth, each having a record to compare with any other college in the land in the service done for its alumni, and each so endowed as to put them both beyond dependence upon public charity for their continuance — dependent though they be upon that charity for enlargement — I say, taking them as they are, with their respective histories and growths and inherent powers of life, and with an open field before them for a magnanimous and honorable competition, does it not behoove us all, friends of both institutions alike, to raise the demand that this question of union — debated so long, and with no advantage to either, but with injury to both — be forever dismissed? and that we take measures to have it distinctly understood everywhere in the land that the University of Vermont and Middlebury College are to abide unalterably in their respective seats of learning; each retaining its original charter and integrity and distinctive features; each a stimulus to the other; and both uniting to dismiss whatever of the spirit of hostility may have marred their beauty in the past, while they together cherish the spirit of good-will and mutual helpfulness? Surely this decision, solidly reached and publicly avowed and accepted, could issue only in good to these institutions and to the general public.[1] We are

[1] The following sagacious remarks of President Labaree, in the Baccalaureate previously alluded to, have lost but little of their force since they were uttered in 1865: "The condition of the higher institutions of learning in Vermont is quite peculiar. Public sentiment is divided and confused in regard to them. It demands progress, but does not comprehend what true progress it. It seeks for some great thing, but has no well defined idea what it wants. ..... On the assumption that we have too many colleges in Vermont, various plans of union have been proposed by the Legislature, by the Trustees of some of the institu-

familiar with the fact that it has been a varied ground of complaint whenever appeals have been made to the public in behalf of these institutions, that they both ought never to have been founded, that they both are doing the work of one, that they are appealing to the same region of country for patronage, that they are exposed to the evils of a perpetual hostility, and that they are needlessly taxing the benevolence of the community.

To these forms of complaint, it may be replied that, however justly they may have been urged in the past, their force has been mainly, if not entirely, broken by two facts, which I will ask you carefully to consider. The first is indicated in what President Buckham denominates in his Inaugural Address,[1] "the new policy" of the University, whereby these institutions are made to diverge very materially from one another; the second is found in the change which has come over both of these institutions alike in their relation to the country at large by the facilities of modern travel. The complaints against the friends of education in Vermont, that they should cherish both of these institutions, are so grave as to justify me in calling attention at the outset to these two points.

tions, or by individuals interested; but no one has yet met with general favor. Nothing will satisfy the large desires of some ambitious minds, but a great central institution, that shall embrace and control all the higher departments of education in the State, and give tone and direction to all inferior grades of instruction. That such a central power, under the guidance of political authority, and oftentimes no doubt of a single will, would not promote the highest interests of the people, we most fully believe. It is not according to the genius of popular institutions to concentrate power in a few hands. Institutions of education, as well as civil institutions, may serve as checks and balances to each other. ..... This notion of centralization in education and in other departments of human activity has become a favorite one with some. But it tends to evil, and, if not checked by suitable guards and balances, the result may be highly prejudicial to the best interests of the people. Let the moneyed power of the State as represented in banks and railroads be united with the educational power, and placed under the direction of a great central political influence, and the character of humanity must be greatly improved, or the rights of the people would be seriously endangered."

[1] Inaugural Address of Prof. Matthew Henry Buckham as President of the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College, delivered at Burlington, Aug. 2, 1871.

It is true that these institutions are still to abide in their respective locations, and that they have now, and will have, very much that is common between them; but in many important particulars they have greatly diverged, and, it is believed, with a decided advantage to both. The University continues to be "the child of the State"[1] and its dependant, and thus, as she herself has foreseen, is not unexposed to "political intrigues,"[2] and is liable "to be controlled for political purposes."[3] The College, on the other hand, has no vital dependence on the State, and asks from it no favors but those guaranteed to her in her chartered rights, and is secure against the caprice and violence of political parties. The University — reaching towards its ideal, a *Universitas Literarum et Scientiarum* — has, while retaining as far as possible, and even enhancing, the excellences of its old course, enlarged its curriculum in the direction of the natural sciences and the more practical arts of life, and this in compliance with the popular demands of the age; admitting students of either sex, and students of unequal attainments; some to pursue the college course proper, some the distinctively scientific, some the agricultural, and some the partial course, in one or another of its forms; each student electing his course, and some with immediate reference to their vocations in life; each going forth with the honors of a college diploma, but whose worth is determined by its place on a Scale of Degrees.[4] The College, contrariwise, content to realize simply the idea of the New England college — the equivalent of the German gymnasium, — continues to make mental drill and culture a specialty, and in the use of the old appliances; admits only young men, and they all as collegians proper, and in the regular course, and candidates for the honors of the same degree; thus preserving her

[1] President James Marsh, D.D.

[2] Professor Nathaniel G. Clark.

[3] President John Wheeler, D.D.

[4] Vide Catalogue of the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College. 1874–75, p. 7, foot-note: "CL. — Classical Course. SC. — Scientific Course. LS. — Literary Scientific Course. SP. — Special Course. CH. — Chemical Course. E. — Civil Engineering."

catalogue in highest honor, though the names therein may chance to be comparatively few.

To many minds this "departure" of the University from its historic insistence upon a method of rigid linguistic, mathematical, and philosophical discipline for all its students will be received with gratification, as indicating "the measure of its progress," and fitting it to command a more varied and miscellaneous patronage. On the other hand, many will rejoice that the College has made no adventure in this direction; but, rigidly adhering to the old course, asserts it still as her distinctive aim to make men; sending forth all who come and entrust themselves to her disciplinary culture and training with the rounded fulness of a robust and ennobled manhood, and graced with her highest honors. Many will account this unmixed and homogeneous character of her students as an advantage to the students themselves, and to the future record of the College.

In these particulars, then, these two institutions have diverged; and I make a point of this divergence, not to show how the one can gain an advantage over the other because of it, but just the reverse — how the prosperity of both can be enhanced by it; for be it remembered that I am directing attention to this divergence not for its own sake, but to show how it puts into the hands of the friends of both institutions an appliance wherewith they may not only justify their separate and distinct existence, but enable them to make the stronger appeal to a liberal-minded and generous public for their more ample endowment. Marking the divergent and dissimilar character of these colleges, and the practicability of their maintaining towards each other an amicable relationship while running careers of usefulness and prosperity side by side, neither a hinderance to the other, but each provoking the other to good works; men of wealth, who wish to imitate an example which is becoming happily prevalent, and fund their possessions in institutions of learning, will not hesitate to select the one or the other of these institutions, or both, as the object, or the objects, of their beneficence.

These two institutions, then, are no longer one and the same thing. They are diverse; and as diverse will better subserve the varied interests of the community, command a wider patronage, and make their appeals to the Christian public for their enlargement and increased facilities with more show of reason and urgency than ever before.

But this objection to these colleges, that they are both sustained in unhappy rivalry to do the work of one — an objection which can now be urged no more — takes to itself another phase, which needs to be noticed; to wit, that they have the same, and that a very limited, and not a populous, region of country for their supply of students. They have been supposed to be bounded on the north by Canada, on the east by Dartmouth, on the south by Williams and Union, on the west by the wilderness. But the time is approaching, and now is, when some question should be raised concerning this limitation of the bounds of their habitation. It is possible that the change which has come over these institutions in their relation to the general public by the facilities of modern travel, forbids that they be confined to a local, and be required to do a national, service. By no means is it to be questioned that these institutions are to have a local value and do a local work; to this end were they born, and to this end shall they live. But it was never supposed by their founders, nor is it to be supposed by us to-day, or by anybody else, that they are to do an exclusively local work. Their gates are open to all comers, near or remote; and they are accounted as all the better fitted to do home service by the infusion of new life into them through students of varied culture from different sections of the country. Shut in as these colleges were at the start by lake and mountain range, enjoying none of the facilities of modern travel, their dependence was mainly upon surrounding towns for students. And had these towns fulfilled their promise of growth, and never been encroached upon by foreign institutions, through avenues opening to them by steam and rail, they would have furnished for our colleges *in perpetuum* a rich supply of students. But that promise was not fulfilled; and meanwhile

every home in Western Vermont has been placed within a few hours of the oldest and most richly endowed institutions in the land. When President Dwight, a century ago, was finding his way from New Haven, Conn., through the primeval forests and new settlements of Western New England to this locality, and giving inception to Middlebury College as a *local necessity*, Watt and Stephenson were beginning to put their thought into bands and bars of steel, and creating that engine of power which, thundering on its iron way through our valley, has had the brazen effrontery to dispute with the Reverend President of Yale this necessity, and to countermand his work.

We need to keep in mind the condition of things as they were when these two colleges sprang into being. The saddle, the family carriage, and the stage-coach were the common means of conveyance. Dartmouth College was two or three days from this meridian. Williams and Union could be reached in no briefer time. Yale and Harvard were as distant as Oxford and Heidelberg are from us of to-day. In this condition of things it is no wonder that the Christian ministry and the churches, stimulated by the echo of the woodman's axe and the crash of falling trees, and full of the spirit of frontier enterprise, and forecasting a dense population surging through this valley, accounted these colleges local necessities, and plied their consecrated brawn to putting them into being. But the locomotive engine, that imperial monarch who is laying his hand with such controlling force upon the destinies of empire the world over, has asserted his authority in Western Vermont, changing the location of villages and the balance of power in our townships, familiarizing the minds of the people with the idea of travel, putting them in immediate proximity with the great centres of trade and of thought, and enforcing upon them everywhere the tastes and artificial usages of metropolitan life. The revolution is remarkable; to many minds it is inauspicious. For good or evil, it has modified the whole order of New England's commercial and social life. It is thought by some to have infringed upon the integrity of

the family, impaired the stability of the State, and disturbed the foundations, and even marred the glory, of our churches. Strange it would be if, in the midst of these upheavals and transformations, our institutions of learning should stand unmoved. Nor have they thus stood; they have felt the shock. Many of our young men, catching the spirit of the age, are enamored of things seen and temporal; and have gone, or are going, in pursuit of them. The comparatively few who seek an education decry our colleges as meagre and inadequate. Harvard and Yale and Dartmouth are near at hand; and the name of each carries in it a powerful fascination to a young Vermonter just waking from his slumbers in his mountain home, with "an eye kindling like a young eagle's at the morning sunbeam." Local resistance is no hinderance. In one third the time consumed by Dr. Eaton in bringing his son Horace from Enosburgh to Middlebury College, fifty-six years ago, the young man from that same goodly town to-day can reach, with more convenience, if not with less expense, the doors of any college in New England; and when he has reached them he is, in point of time, nearer home than was young Eaton when in college here.

Thus it is that our Vermont colleges are suffering from that tendency to consolidation and monopoly that seems to be asserting itself throughout the country with the force of destiny. We live in an age of mastication — when great things are eating up the small ones; when not only the larger railroad and steamboat companies and mercantile establishments are extending their omnivorous magnanimity to all smaller companies and establishments, and when the metropolitan newspaper, religious or secular, is going about the country like a roaring lion, seeking whom it may devour in the form of some rural sheet, but when even our older and larger colleges show a hankering for a country diet, and a willingness to have served up for their tables the smaller institutions that may chance to stand in their way. Nor are they so much to be blamed; for what would Yale and Harvard do for students were they circumscribed to their original

local, and not permitted their modern national, range? It needs to be remembered that our modern facilities for travel and inter-communication, our postal and express systems and the telegraph, have so put distance at defiance, and geographically concentred the life of the nation, that no institution — journalistic, mercantile, or educational — retains its old local importance. Hence to ground our argument for our Vermont colleges on the old plea of local necessity, is to miss the line of defence which best justifies their continued existence. Without having lost one iota of their local value, having a home service to render more important, if possible, than ever before, and rendering it all the better the more widely they are patronized, they yet assert a claim to a patronage and a service that shall have no metes and bounds. Make either "a pent-up Utica," "cribbed, cabined, and confined," and it dies. It has no local necessity which the people in its neighborhood can successfully vindicate. If it asserts not a necessity that transcends these limits, it is a thing so meagrely in demand that perish it must, and perish it ought.

Nor is this expansion of their fields of labor peculiar to our Vermont colleges. Every college in New England has ceased to plead the old argument of local necessity, and is asserting a claim to patronage as extensive as the reach of its influences and its fame. A reference to our college catalogues will show to what extent this claim is honored by young men, meeting each other on the way, and traversing one another's paths, as they gather from here and there, and from the remotest sections of the country, at their chosen seats of learning. The question of distance seems to have passed out of their reckoning.

If, then, this is the changed relation of our New England colleges to one another, — each having no local confinement, but running out its roots and the lines of its life into the country at large, and having the whole country for its field, — what becomes of this complaint against our Vermont institutions, that they have the same, and that a very limited, and not a populous, region of country to draw from? The truth is, and it ought to be known and accepted, that the University

of Vermont and Middlebury College have just as large a field to work in and to draw from as Yale College or Harvard University; and working together in that field they have no more occasion for living in jarring conflict with each other than with these other older and larger institutions. I insist that the bounds prescribed to our colleges shall be altogether conterminous with their capacities for usefulness; and never till our complainers have placed a limit to the good conferred upon mankind by such men as Collamer and Foot, Beman and Post and Smith, Nelson and Saxe and Aldis and Royce, Wright and Spalding and Phelps and Raymond, Shedd and Pease and Marsh and Fisk and Bingham and Clark and Cutler and Herrick — names[1] which are synonymes for circles of influence that are girdling the globe — shall they prescribe to our colleges the bounds of their habitation. Some things are uncertain; but we may rest assured that Vermont will guard as the apples of her two eyes these cherished institutions of our fathers.

If now in thus speaking I have not wandered wide of the truth, it is quite obvious to us all that the Vermont college, this or that, will succeed largely in the midst of the difficulties that environ it, only by seeing things as they are, and by going to work to do things as they ought to be done. It cannot ignore the fact of recent changes. It must bring into requisition a keen insight, a wise circumspection, and a sagacious forecast. It must disclose a spirit in harmony with the genuinely progressive tendencies of the age. It must forget things that are behind and reach forth unto those that are before, and press towards the mark for the prize of a

[1] Jacob Collamer, LL.D., U.V.M. 1810; Solomon Foot, LL.D., M.C. 1826; Nathan S. S. Beman, D.D., M.C. 1807; Truman M. Post, D.D., M.C. 1829; Henry Smith, D.D., M.C. 1827; Samuel Nelson, LL.D., M.C. 1813; John G. Saxe, LL.D., M.C. 1839; Asa O. Aldis, A.M., U.V.M. 1829; Stephen Royce, LL.D., M.C. 1807; Silas Wright, LL.D., M.C. 1815; James R. Spalding, A.M., U.V.M. 1840; Edward J. Phelps, LL.D., M.C. 1840; Henry J. Raymond, A.M., U.V.M. 1840; William G. T. Shedd, D.D., U.V.M. 1839; Calvin Pease, D.D., U.V.M. 1838; Sidney H. Marsh, D.D., U.V.M. 1846; Pliny Fisk, A.M., M.C. 1814; Hiram Bingham, A.M., M.C. 1816; Nathaniel G. Clark, D.D., U.V.M. 1845; Ebenezer Cutler, D.D., U.V.M. 1845; George F. Herrick, U.V.M. 1856.

supreme excellence. Quick with a life all its own, it must be a thing of pure quality and genuine merit and unalterable and consecrated purpose.

This leads me to consider the College in another aspect; and to inquire *into some of the conditions of her greater success.*

It is obvious that she may be relieved from all embarassment arising from the old question of union, and have accorded to her the whole country as her field of labor, and yet offer no such facilities and assert no such excellence as to enter that field and command the regard of the public and an extended patronage. She must recognize and accede to the inexorable necessity of making progress by legitimate and honorable competition. To fall back upon her dignity, and to refuse to enter the field and assert an imperial claim to the regard of the world by disclosing a spirit of advance, and its fruits, is to gather about her the cerements of the grave.

But in considering this matter of the success of the College, let us not be extravagant in our expectations as to the *extent* of it, or mistake in respect to its *quality*. It would be all unreasonable to anticipate for our College in the present generation — I presume not to say what shall be the compass of her work in ages to come — an inflow of students such as we now witness at some of our colleges. Our ambition will suffer no chagrin if we can see in each of our classes that number of students required in order to awaken a genuine enthusiasm in study and that healthful and invigorating incitement that comes from adequate competition of mind with mind in the class-room. The success of a college turns not upon the number of its students, as the preacher's turns not upon the number of his hearers. The quality of the work done, as well as the number to whom it relates, must be taken into the account. The real power of a college is not longitudinal, but perpendicular — it is determined not so much by the numbers it may encompass and influence as by the thoroughness and depth of its work in those committed to it. A college that has in it a class of seven may be made

by some the object of jest; but when it is made to appear that Dr. Nathan S. S. Beman, Hon. Daniel A. A. Buck, Chief Justice Stephen Royce, and Governor William Slade were four of its members, it may be pardoned for retorting by bringing that same class along-side of other classes of five times that number in other triennials. With a true standard of college success before us, not where numbers simply are considered, but where power is expended and generated, let us advance.

Every college put into operation soon comes to be in a good sense *sui generis;* to have a life of its own, distinguishable in its type and character from all others of its kind. The men who laid its foundations and christened it; the people that stood by it and sustained it in its earlier struggles; the guardians who have supervised it along the lines of its history; the professors who have plied in it the instruments of discipline and culture; and especially the successive classes, which have not left it without stamping it with their impress, and the promise to bequeath to it the rich legacy of honors that shall gather upon them — and gather upon them after "the death-stars have arisen upon their names," [1] — all, all unite to constitute its informing spirit and to invest it with its peculiar sanctities. It is thus that it comes to be accounted as one of the homes of the gods. And now you will insist that Middlebury College exults in this law of the spirit of life within her, wherein she carries the accumulated forces of her being. She has an established character. Her richest and best endowments are in her marvellous history. She has her ancestral faith and traditions and sympathies. She lives in an atmosphere of scholastic and religious opinion in which she has invested herself along the lines of her history. Hence you require me to place *foremost* among the conditions of her success a firm adherence to her historic spirit and methods. You have confidence in her established character; and, chary of her honor, you wish to see her preserved in unbroken continuity. You believe in the old paths, and require that they who succeed to the service of the noble

[1] Prof. and Hon. James Meacham's Baccalaureate. 1849.

done to put power and nerve into that bond.[1] The Trustees of the College and her administration unite in soliciting whatsoever the alumni have to impart, that is profitable for college doctrine, for reproof, for correction, or for instruction, that this institution of the God of our fathers may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

A *fourth* condition of success to the College is found in her fidelity to her original mission as a distinctively Christian college. From the first she was set apart from a common and dedicated to a sacred service. The motive that prompted her founders and gave them the sympathy of the community when they undertook the enterprise, and that sustained them in it and carried them through it, was the conviction that the world was in need of educated Christian men for ministers and lawyers and doctors, for missionaries and teachers and editors and statesmen; and that the raw material for such men was found in rich abundance in Vermont homes, and that a college among them at Middlebury was needed as the instrument to bring out this material and work it into shape and adorn it with culture. And it stands a fact in New England history that Middlebury College has continued true to this original idea. Such has been her fidelity to it, that she has been accounted as one of the foremost of our colleges in the positiveness of her religious character; and, in proportion to her graduates, in the abundance of her Christian service. So true is this that the mention of her name carries with it to the general Christian mind the idea of sound biblical scholarship. Her work for the Master

[1] The following Resolution discussed at the annual meeting of the Associated Alumni in 1874, and which was taken up and carried at their annual meeting in 1875, commends itself to the respectful consideration of the Trustees of the College:

"*Whereas*, It is our judgment that the welfare of Middlebury College demands a more intimate and confidential relation between the Alumni and the Management, and that the interest of the Alumni in the prosperity of their Alma Mater would be increased by additional responsibilities; therefore,

"*Resolved*, That Official Reports of the condition of the College should be annually made by the Corporation to the Associated Alumni, and that the Alumni should be invited to nominate for the filling of at least a portion of the vacancies occurring from time to time in the Corporation."

has been an ointment poured upon his head; and, incidentally, it has filled the world with the fragrance of her name.

But this pronounced religious character of the College has not only drawn to her the high regard of men; it has been the magnet that has attracted to her the material supplies upon which she has subsisted. It is because of it that her treasury has been replenished with generous gifts; and not only from large-hearted men of wealth who have learned to know her and to love her, but from the common people as well; for in this impulse of gratitude the gifts of the poor and widow's mites have not been withheld.

And now I wish to affirm it to-day, and have it re-affirmed by you, that if Middlebury College has any mission in the future, it is accomplished by moving directly forward in this line of her historic march. For her to belie her record and forget her trust and be ashamed of the gospel; for her to imbibe a philosophy falsely so-called, or become in the least vitiated with the doubts and platitudes of modern sceptical unbelief; for her not to stand firm in the faith, with feet planted deep in the porphyry of an undoubted Christianity, defending her against the vapid rant of illiterate fanatics and maudlin sentimentalists, on the one hand, and the assaults of infidelity, enrobed in the garbs of erudition and science, on the other; for her to disclose a tendency towards accepting the wisdoms of men — phosphorescent irradiations emitted from decay and illuminating it — as a substitute for the wisdom of God in a mystery; or for her to imitate the example of Meroz, and take no positive stand and active part, and show herself affluent of no works and service done in the defence and promotion of the religion of the fathers, — I say for *this* College to disclose any distrust here or faltering or evasions, is for her to give up the breath that she breathes, and to gather upon her, in her apostasy, the character of a monumental infamy like that which belongs to the pillar of salt by the sea of Sodom. If Middlebury College is not a clean Christian college, from the centre out to every mathematical point in her circumference, she is no college at all. This is not saying that she is, or is to be, hampered by a narrow

denominational zeal. She is, and shall be, no more intent upon strengthening her Christian stakes than she is upon so lengthening her Christian cords as to embrace, without a sense of difference, all who accept the faith once delivered to the saints.[1] Nor is this saying that she will not foster a spirit of inquiry, and boldly interrogate every question of philosophy or of science or of history; and, finding the truth, follow it, as the redeemed in the Apocalypse follow the Lamb, whithersoever it goeth. Accounting honest doubt not inimical, but conducive to, a genuine faith, and, believing truth to suffer not less from the timidity of her friends than from the assaults of her enemies, this College shall evermore exult to go forth into every department of knowledge, the fearless investigator as well as the valiant defender.

A *fifth* condition of success to the College is, that she put herself into influential contact with the people. In these times of aggressive activity and onset, when things move because they are made to move, the College cannot shut herself into cloistered stillness to enjoy by herself the luxuries of academic life. She must come forth and be abroad in her representatives among the people, as in sympathy with them and in service for them. She must make it known that she exists; is a thing of life; and is affluent of ideas of practical worth. Through the press, in the pulpit, on the platform; in associations, ministerial, educational, agricultural, political even; in school examinations and public gatherings, she must make herself felt as an upheaving and ameliorating power. And Middlebury College must do this; do it more than she ever has done it, because our present

[1] "Nor is there need that in this strenuous endeavor to inculcate religious principle and inspire genuine piety, we should incur from any candid mind the reproach of bigotry or sectarian narrowness. There is height and breadth in this divine temple of Christian truth that shame partisanship and awe down the audacity that would cramp its grand catholicity in the straits of a sect. If, as an institution, our patronage and direction have been and are mainly in the hands of one Christian denomination, it is simply to secure unity to its counsels and efficiency in its operations. And far more cordially do we welcome all Christian denominations to share its privileges, and far more secure and valuable are those privileges to all Christian people, than if their guardianship were jealously divided among the denominations."—Dr. Kitchel's Inaugural Address.

times and modes of life make the necessity imperious. This is not saying that she is to obtrude her wares offensively upon the community, but so to present them to public view as to let it be known that she has in her stores treasures of wisdom and knowledge for the people, and for all the people.

And notice that it is through these avenues of approach and contact whereby the College puts herself *en rapport* with the people, that she is to avail herself of her advantages and opportunities. It needs to be remembered that she has these, and has them in rich abundance. Her noble history and good name; her location in the country, with invigorating mountain air, amidst scenery of transcendent natural beauty, and in a community distinguished for its high-toned literary and moral culture; even her numerical smallness as compared with our larger institutions — for a multitude of students is as likely to prove a dissipation to the mind as a stimulus — and the comparative inexpensiveness of graduation here, are advantages which, duly seized upon and wisely used, can be made to pour in rich contributions towards endowing the College with power to compete successfully and honorably with the best colleges in the land. And consider that our College derives great advantages from her peculiar opportunities. I have spoken of her disadvantages; but she has advantages as well, which more than balance the account in her favor. To some of these I have adverted; only upon one in addition have I time to pause.

No college in the land is more favorably located than our own in respect to the kind of people among whom she is intrenched. She is in Vermont; and amidst a people, therefore, who get their living by earning it; who are characterized by their high moral principles, by their industry, frugality, and thrift. While her doors are shut to none, the greater number of her students will come to her from surrounding towns on either side of the Champlain and from the valleys and hill-sides of this Switzerland of America. Early inured to toil and hardship; industrious, frugal, religiously trained; taking into their character something of the solidity and strength of the hills that surround them, and full of the

spirit of that natural oratory which such scenery is fitted to inspire, these young men are the material upon which the College will delight to ply her implements of culture. Another thing: physically trained and cultured in the gymnasia of these Vermont farms, it will not be needful for them to spend most of their college time and their fathers' money in this wretched business of boating. I know not how others may feel, but I turn from the late spectacle of the equivalent of a pagan tournament at Saratoga as positively revolting. Let it be a source of exultation to us that we draw our students to such an extent fresh from the gymnastic drill of the farm and the shop that no such unscholarly and demoralizing necessity as this mode of physical culture shall ever be imposed upon us.[1]

But let it not be inferred from my thus speaking that I regard all the conditions of success to the College to come from within herself. Important conditions are external to her, and must come from the community at large. Not self-sufficient nor self-satisfying, the College must live and prosper by public favor. Born of the popular will, her dependence is upon the popular will. Excellent as she may be, and rich in stores, her appeal must be made to a generous public to advance her to a higher excellence and to greater usefulness.

Should, however, the conditions of success which I have considered as abiding within herself exist, we may be

[1] This paragraph is permitted to stand in the abrupt and out-spoken form in which it was originally written. It betrays possibly an excess of personal feeling. It is difficult, however, to heed the Apostle's injunction, and "*abhor* evil," without speaking of it in a style that will be distasteful to its abettors. It is a cheering sign of the times that are passing over us that the evil in question is abating. Many of our Colleges have withdrawn already from a contest where muscular power is the crown of honor, and the animal in man is the thing of superlative interest. It would be an unjust inference from the utterance in the text, to suppose that the speaker is in anywise opposed to our modern and improved methods of physical training. They are demanded. A gymnasium is a desideratum to Middlebury College, and should be forthcoming. Nor can the slightest objection be urged to *boating* as it is now practised by the students of the College on the Otter Creek. No stream conducts the student through more picturesque and enchanting scenery; and no exercise is more agreeable and invigorating. It is not difficult to see a difference between this form of boating and the *business* that has been made of it in preparing for the National Regatta.

confident of this very thing, that another and a *sixth* condition of success to the College will not be wanting: she will receive an abundant response from the people; and in two important particulars—in funds and in students. Faithful in that which is least and over a few things, we may rest confident in the assurance that she shall have abundance, and be ruler over many things. If this College is true to her historic spirit and traditions, and determined in her purpose to advance in the excellence of her work, the time is not distant when she will so command the confidence of the public that treasures will be exhumed for her more ample endowment. There are some who think it strange that the benevolence of the age should pour its contributions so abundantly into our larger and more flourishing institutions, while certain equally excellent and more needy institutions are permitted to struggle on amidst embarrassment. But this seeming oversight is not to continue. There are signs that assure us that public sentiment is not in favor of massing students disproportionately at seats of learning in seaboard towns. It is believed by the people at large that it is better for students themselves, and better for the country, that our inland colleges should command their natural proportion of patronage. When this belief once asserts itself with authority, our smaller colleges will no longer pine in obscurity. Sagacious and benevolent men will so come to their relief and establish them upon firm foundations, and with every facility for their work, that the patronage which they would naturally command could not easily be drawn away. There are those who believe that there is no such difference of excellence in the work done in our colleges as to justify the disparity which we now witness in the numbers gathered in their halls. In only one way can this disparity be reduced: *by a more thorough equipment of the smaller institutions.* Let Middlebury College be more amply endowed; her buildings put in better condition; her library replenished; a gymnasium erected and duly equipped; a philosophical hall and art gallery built; in short, let her put out signs of life in these forms of advance, and stand abreast

with the times; and — with the vantage ground she occupies in her excellent history, with the favor of the public, which she so largely enjoys, and her influential alumni — the time of her high prosperity is at hand. With this enlargement and these increased facilities the days of her mourning shall be ended; and her name shall be called "Sought Out."

Fathers and Friends: these things I have spoken. Resting in the divine sources of supply and sustained by your words of cheer, I assume the duties of this office. I do it in profound deference to the great and good men who have gone before me; consciously unworthy of so noble an association, yet encouraged and stimulated by it.

And the office is assumed not without hope. Delivered forever from the embarrassments which have hampered her, and sometimes hurled her into the agony of a suspense of destiny; and the conditions of success which we have considered measurably accorded to her, Middlebury College can anticipate only a successful advance. The prayers of successive generations are going up as a memorial for her. She has a grand mission yet to accomplish. The bow of the divine promise arches the gateway of her future. Let us advance to pass under it only to see it recede before us; not a tantalizing mockery, but our beneficent and everlasting guide. In this confidence I close with the words of an alumnus of the College whose name is a fragrance poured forth throughout the State — once her chief executive, and afterwards an honored professor in these halls — words uttered on a different occasion, indeed, but which equally befit this: "High! high, then, are the hopes and glorious the ends which beckon us onward!"